Article from:

Long-Term Care News

May 2009 – Issue 23

The "Pure" Possibilities

by Bruce A. Stahl

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A friend who happens to be a member of the Democratic Party called me a purist when I told him I voted for Ron Paul in the Republican presidential primary. I took that comment as a compliment, because it seemed to me that being a purist meant I was hoping the three branches of the federal government might try a little harder to follow their respective roles as identified in the constitution.

Though the authors of the articles in this newsletter do not necessarily work within political circles, seeking to be a purist appears to be in vogue in LTC insurance today. David Hippen submitted an article opining that LTC actuaries have failed to be purists with regard to their own professional duties. I personally wrote a reply to this opinion, and David responded to my reply. (The editors hope that you will offer your own opinions in the debate.)

Other articles in this issue also seek purity in some fashion, or at least recognition when purity is not possible. Brad Linder pointed to the need for pure compliance with examples regarding policy provisions. Roger Loomis identified how actuaries may communicate the lack of purity as we price various demographic cells and policy options. Larry Pfannerstill submitted an article wherein he addressed the need for all stakeholders to be purists in addressing rate increases. Al Schmitz provided an update on reserving according to principles that are closer to actual experience or, we might say, with greater purity. Finally, Don Grimes describes his involvement in an LTCI educational effort with an aim to provide pure information: "In 2007 the State of South Dakota Department of Social Services began a yearlong statewide education effort to provide accurate and impartial information on LTC and the new SD Partnership LTCI plans that were just being offered."

So, with pure delight, we thank the authors for their contributions, and offer this issue to the readers and members of the LTC Section of the SOA. ■

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Issue Number 23 | May 2009

Published by the Long-Term Care Insurance Section Council of the Society of Actuaries

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